

PEOPLE & THINGS

THE first time I travelled at 100 m.p.h. on the open road was in a three-litre Bugatti along the Fair Mile at Henley in 1928, but this was a racing car, and up to the war very few standard makes of car could achieve this speed off the track in comparative safety.

"What's the use of having a fast car in an island as small as yours?" an American once said to me. "You have to spend the whole time stamping on the brakes so as not to go over the edge."

Today there are eleven standard makes of car which are entirely at home in London traffic but which are guaranteed a top speed of 100 m.p.h. or better. Yet our roads are not greatly improved and the congestion on them is far worse.

Nightmares of the Road

NOW, without going into the question of whether it is the slow driver or the fast one who causes most accidents, it is undoubtedly true that very superior skill and judgment are involved in the really fast driving which is today within the reach of anyone aged seventeen with around £1,000 to spend.

Recent accidents to young men in sports cars make me wonder whether some qualification, additional to the normal driving test, should not be required of the sports car owner and, of course, of the riders of that deadly weapon the 100 m.p.h. motor-cycle.

How many of them would satisfy the Flying Squad, or our Alpine, Monte Carlo and other Rally drivers that they are qualified to drive one of these beautiful but lethal machines?

The good driver of a fast car is far safer than the bad driver of a slow car. But the bad driver of a fast car or motor-cycle is a potential assassin.

Stately Studios

CO-OPERATION between artists generally begins and ends with letters to the newspapers. But now for the third year the distinguished group who live near Great Bardfield, in Essex, have banded together to form a collective market for their works.

For the whole of this week the homes of the eight artists, who include Edward Bawden, John Aldridge and Michael Rothenstein, will be open to visitors, and the natives of East Anglia will surely

By ATTICUS

be tempted to buy a charcoal or an oil in exchange for this glimpse into eight Bohemian interiors.

THE FAIR HAND

When I had the acute pleasure of receiving a letter written in this hand I made enquiry & found that it costs only ten shillings a year to belong to the Society for Italic Handwriting (Treasurer: 51 Cholmeley Park, Highgate, N6) The aim of the Society is to revive & perpetuate the beautiful, legible and easily learnt handwriting of the Italian Renaissance and help those often heard to remark: 'I must do something about my handwriting.'

Brit. Pub. Inc.

IN nearly one hundred thousand American homes you will today find a British magazine or newspaper.

Sometimes it lies on the "chiffonier" to impress visitors—what the publishers of smart books call "a furniture sale"—more often it is read from cover to cover by the whole family.

The man responsible for doing almost as much for the British point of view as the British Information Services in America is Mr. John Marsh, a stocky, quiet-spoken man, who has just been over here on a visit.

In 1946 he founded British Publications Inc., and he now represents 400 British periodicals in America.

Private Enterprise

MR. MARSH is a mine of information about sales promotion in America, but he is at

the moment the victim of his own know-how.

Believing that Americans read their magazines almost as much for the advertising as for the text, he started inserting a reply-paid card in magazines to help readers buy the articles advertised for the English public.

He is completely snowed under by the replies and from being a one-man British Information Service he is now rapidly turning into a one-man British Chamber of Commerce.

"The Stable Definition"

MR. JUSTICE STABLE'S summing-up in the recent "obscene book" case of Regina v. Secker and Warburg is now rightly acclaimed as a classic in its kind; and the jury, too, must be accorded a place in literary history, for their attention to the Judge's warning that their verdict "will have great bearing upon where the line is drawn between liberty (that freedom to read and think as the spirit moves us) and licence (which is an affront to the society of which we are all of us members)".

When I called upon Mr. Fredric J. Warburg, the principal defendant, I found that this towering wry-faced Bogart-browed intellectual was grappling with congratulatory correspondence that had flowed in from addresses as far removed as Dubrovnik, Mogador, Newport, Pa., Knocke-Le Zoute, and Adelaide. One or two sympathisers had even gone so far as to send a cheque.

It would seem as if Mr. Justice Stable's call to order and reason has been heeded far beyond the confines of the jury-box.

London's New "Heavy"

MR. FRANK THRING'S is not, as yet, "a name to conjure with"; but my colleague Harold Hobson's high estimate of this young Australian actor is shared by many shrewd judges.

Mr. Thring is that rare being: a tragedian who doesn't want to play Hamlet. "The King's more my dish," he assured me when I nosed him out, last week at the G. Theatre. The middle-aged "heavy" was, in fact, Mr. Thring's speciality during the four years in which he ran his own theatre in Melbourne, and his rôles included Herod in "Salome" (the part which he is to play at the St. Martin's Theatre from next Tuesday onwards), Volpone, Othello and Oedipus.

Nature, however, has yet to catch up with Art. Mr. Thring is only twenty-eight. To Londoners wearied by the spoon-and-cup school of acting he brings a welcome diabolism, and of his own favourites among the older school of actors he says, "You may like them or you may not; but when they're on the stage you do at least know that they're there."

Remaindered

A WOMAN famous in the world of books employs a large and capable staff of men.

Since her business demands that she should recruit men who are "bookish" but meticulously businesslike, it occurred to me to ask her how she avoided the misfit.

She was definite. "I have three rules," she said. "I will not employ any man who wears suede shoes or a beard or who writes his letters of application in coloured ink."